

14 January 2014

Research Director
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Submitted via email: lacsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Queensland business community, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the State Government on the *Fair Trading Inspectors Bill 2013*.

With respect to the *Bill* currently before the Committee, CCIQ broadly supports its principal object namely, to consolidate and standardise inspectorate provisions and the corresponding enforcement powers contained therein. CCIQ believes rogue operators engaging in illegal activities in an unregistered capacity are not exposed to the same cost-structures as compliant businesses and derive a competitive advantage in the business environment through breaking the law. CCIQ welcomes any legislative initiative that seeks to curtail business operators that run contrary to the law and commend the Queensland Government for focusing its attention on ensuring exploitative and/or criminal activity is reduced in Queensland's business community.

Overall, CCIQ believes the Government possesses the right intent with respect to the proposals contained in the *Bill*, and urges the Committee to ensure that any enacted legislation unambiguously reflects this intent. Particularly with respect to Clause 34, which makes provision for the power to stop or move a vehicle, CCIQ warns that if not specifically provided for, this clause may have the negative effect of capturing businesses that are compliant with operating fair trading legislation. The incidental outcome of failing to carefully craft legislation that communicates clarity and certainty will be the unnecessary imposition of an additional layer of red tape, which is largely inconsistent with the broad policy objectives and legislative agenda of the current Government.

CCIQ argues that although consolidation and standardisation of legislation will reduce red tape, the Government is cautioned against replacing it with another form of regulation that will increase the time and expense businesses are forced to outlay, even when doing the right thing. In short, inspectors must have compelling justification for pulling over a commercial vehicle. Such action must be specifically targeted and no potential for random compliance measures in this area.

In sum, CCIQ believes there is certainly space for tackling underhand and exploitative business dealings by unregistered or otherwise non-compliant business owners, and welcomes the projected reduction in administrative red tape. In light of this however, CCIQ advises that the Government, when implementing the provisions, ensure that unnecessary and burdensome compliance checks do not interfere with business owners and operators getting on with the job of running their businesses.

CCIQ is supportive of the State Government's process of canvassing stakeholder views on the above proposals. CCIQ looks forward to continuing to work with the State Government to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for Queensland businesses, our economy and the community. If required, CCIQ is available to appear before the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to clarify business community feedback on the Bill. If you have any questions regarding this correspondence please contact Senior Policy Advisor Kate Whittle on (07) 3842 2227 or email kwhittle@cciq.com.au.

Yours Sincerely,



Nick Behrens
General Manager, Advocacy
Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland